

STAT

TROY TIMES RECORD (N. Y.)

19 January 1980

Stratton opposes creating a CIA charter

By MICHAEL CONNOR

Record Albany Bureau

TROY — Rep. Samuel S. Stratton, D-Amsterdam, Friday said he opposes a movement in Washington to write a charter for the Central Intelligence Agency.

"It's better to leave them alone," Stratton said during a meeting with the editorial board of The Times Record and The Sunday Record. "You don't want to write too many restrictions into a charter. It's unrealistic stuff."

Stratton, a ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee, appears to be among a growing number of congressmen and senators looking favorably towards the intelligence-gathering outfit. Apparently the hostage-taking in Iran and the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union has created wide-spread doubts about America's ability to collect reliable information on foreign military and political developments.

According to The Christian Science Monitor, that sentiment in Congress may help incorporate pro-CIA provisions into a charter being drafted. Those pro-CIA features include reduc-

ing from eight to two the number of watchdog congressional committees; outlawing the identifying of undercover agents; and curbing public access to many classified documents through the federal Freedom of Information Act.

"I'm leery of writing restrictions into it," Stratton said. "Those guys will be coming with poison pills and our people with have roses in their pockets and Bibles."

During the interview, Stratton predicted "there will be great agreement on increasing defense spending" when Congress returns to Washington next week. He said an increase proposed last year by the Carter Administration to win support for the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty was meaningless with inflation at near 14 percent annually.

Stratton, a self-described hawk, said a 10 percent increase above the inflation rate was required each year for the foreseeable future. He said the Navy needs more ships. More money must be spent for developing new weapons and the number of conventional weapons such as tanks must be increased, he said.

"I think Congress has been behind the people," he said. "I think people are strong for defense now."

On local matters, Stratton said a \$153 million set of improvements at the Watervliet Arsenal should begin on schedule. "I think they're in good shape," he said.

He also said he would support a bill by Rep. Jonathan B. Bingham, D-The Bronx, likely to aid proponents of plans for a local urban cultural park.